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MOHENJO DARO

THE PEOPLE AND THE LAND

By H. Heras, S.J.

In this article, which could be illustrated with many references to ancient Saṁskṛta literature, only information derived from the inscriptions of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa will be used.

The ancient Dravidian tribes and perhaps also their contemporaries the Kolarians were *totemic*. An animal, a flower, or any other natural object was the *totem* of the tribe, by which they were known and after which they were styled. When the tribe considerably grew, subdivisions were made and each division, without omitting the original name, took a new sign by which they were called. Again very often two tribes or two portions of the country were officially united and the flag of the union had another sign or device on it. This multiplication of symbols, which finally lost the original *totemic* meaning, at times makes their identification extremely puzzling.

The name of India at the time of the glory of Mohenjo Daro was Sid,[1] which means 'stream', 'to flow', in Dravidian languages. At a later period the nasal *n* was added to it and finally the *u* was suffixed, becoming *Sindu* which was the form that the word had at the time of the Aryan invasions.

The inscriptions speak of four great divisions called countries into which Sid was parcelled, viz., Mīnāḍ,[2] or the country of Fishes; Paravanāḍ [3] or the country of Birds; Maraṅkotināḍ [4] or the country of the Woodpecker; and *Elnāḍ* [5] or the Seven Countries. There were most likely other divisions, the names of which will in course of time appear when new inscriptions are unearthed. We shall speak of them in the same order.

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[1] Marshall, M.D., Nos. 294, 396 and 59.

[2] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 4532. This and other similar footnotes are references to photographs kindly supplied by the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India.

[3] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Nos. 12677 and 12688.

[4] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Nos. 3500, 12182 and 3631; M.D., 1928-29, No. 7268; Marshall, M.D., No. 306.

[5] Marshall, M.D., No. 231; Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Nos. 4155, 4815 and 4663; M.D., 1928-29, Nos. 4663, 5215 and 5227.

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Mīnas.

This seems to be the largest and most important of all these four countries. It was the country of the *Mīnas*,[1] later on called the *Matsyas* in Saṁskṛta literature, some of whose remnants, bearing the same name, are still found in several states of Rajputana. The limits of this country cannot be defined, yet the fact that part of the country was in Northern India and another part in the South will help to understand its geographical and political importance.

The *Mīnas* were strong[2] and enterprising people; accordingly they are styled 'great'[3] and 'prosperous'[4] in the inscriptions. Besides war, which will be mentioned later, their occupations were fishing and trade. The former was done in the rivers and undoubtedly also in the sea: their boats[5] and fishing nets[6] are spoken of. The king had imposed a fish tax upon fishermen.[7] Trade is also referred to.[8] Mīnas are mentioned who were the owners of shops.[9] The only commercial transactions seem to have been barter,[10] which was specially brisk in spring and in the beginning of summer.[11] Difficulties as regards this trade sometimes arose, for we find that a judge had once at least to give his decision about the barter of the Mīnas.[12] Some Mīnas were the owners of land.[13] There were besides some Mīnas who seem to have dedicated their life to intellectual pursuits, for some Mīnas living in the solitude of caves are called learned.[14] Caves do not seem to have been the ordinary dwelling of the Mīnas. Indeed, they had comfortable and well built houses.[15] Their original *totem* seems to have been the unicorn which is the most common animal in the seals discovered up to now, but the symbol on their flag were the Two Fishes.[16] 'The justice of the Mīnas' seems to have been proverbial.[17]

The country of the Mīnas is called fertile[18] and metaphorically shining.[19] One of their products was toddy, which by the bye was

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[1] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 4532; M.D., 1928-29, No. 5432.
[2] *J.R.A.S.*, 1925, Pl. X, p. 698.
[3] Marshall, M.D., Nos. 402 and 177.
[4] Marshall, H., No. 38; Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Nos. 3379, 3557, 3589, 5559 and 10400; H., Neg. 3012, No. 6; H., Neg. 3861, Nos. 1, 2 and 5; M.D., 1929-30, Dk, 8406; M.D., 1928-29, No. 4967.
[5] Marshall, H., No. 3931.
[6] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 470.
[7] *Ibid.*, H., No. 33.
[8] *R.A.*, Vol. XXII, p. 99.
[9] Marshall, M.D., No. 79.
[10] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 66.
[11] *A.S.I. Report*, 1923-24, Pl. XIX, No. 18 (M.D.).
[12] Marshall, M.D., Pl. CXVII, No. 12 (Hr. 4337).
[13] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, No. 8028.
[14] Marshall, M.D., No. 21.
[14] As may be seen in Mohenjo Daro itself.
[15] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 10893.
[16] *Ibid.*, No. 5514.
[17] *Ibid.*, No. 3987.
[18] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 4532.

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not very strong.[1] The coconut plantations were many and great. One of the reasons of this fertility was the river Sid that crossed from North to South[2]; 'the stream of the Minas' is mentioned in the inscriptions.[3] Besides, a regular system of canals brought the water of the river to the distant fields. These waterways are very often referred to.[4] The Minas were in what is now Western Sind on the right bank of the Indus and along its lower course. When the Aryas invaded India they were still there. Two cities of this country are specially mentioned.[5] They seem to be Naṇḍūr and Uḍayūr.

Naṇḍūr is the name of the city which has been so successfully excavated in the mounds of the Larkhana District known to the modern Sindhis as Mohenjo Daro.[6] Naṇḍūr means, 'the city of the Crab'. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Naṇḍūr are sometimes called 'the Crabs'.[7] They had good harvests in the surrounding fields of the city.[8] One of their ponds is said to have dried up.[9] The city was apparently the residence of the king of Mīnāḍ who received the title of 'the Farmer of the Crab'.[10] One of the Queens of the Minas owned a coconut plantation.[11] In the neighbourhood of Naṇḍūr there was a cave shaded with a number of trees where corpses were being buried.[12]

The other city of importance was Uḍayūr, 'the leading City', which originally had belonged to the tribe of the Bilavas. The Bilavas were archers and hunters by profession. (Their descendants are the Bhils and perhaps the Veddas of Ceylon.) But they were also tilling the soil and were good cultivators: their harvests were always very successful.[13] A section of this tribe were called *Velvel Bilavas*,[14] i.e. 'Bilavas of the two acacias'. They had a number of cities and towns in their territory, which seems to have been on the eastern bank of the Indus. Their houses were built in the best style having four logs as supports of the roof.[15] Some of their cities are: *Urilūr*,[16] 'a city which is not a city', *Eikeiūr*, 'a city built by hunters', *Mūnmale*, 'the three mountains' (place) and *Mūnūr*, the

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[1] Marshall, M.D., No. 148.
[2] *Ibid.*, No. 396.
[3] *Ibid.*, No. 323.
[4] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 8248.
[5] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 7925; 1930-31, Dk, No. 11868.
[6] This identification will be proved at length in my work, *The Proto-Indian Script and Civilization*.
[7] Marshall, M.D., No. 17; Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk. No. 7925.
[8] Marshall, M.D., No. 33.
[9] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 17.
[10] Marshall, M.D., No. 17 and *passim*.
[11] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12118.
[12] *Ibid.*, No. 4603.
[13] Photo, H., Neg. 3012, No. 4; Marshall, H., No. 165; M.D., No. 69.
[14] Marshall, H., No. 99.
[15] Photo, H., Neg. 3881, No. 8.
[16] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5654.

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original of the late Saṁskṛta rendering Tripura. This seems to have been the main city of the Bilavas,[1] but the palisade round it was not finished for a long time.[2] Five tridents were worshipped there.[3] The cult of this symbol of the Supreme Being was apparently very popular in Mūnūr.[4] Mūnūr seems to have had at least three villages under its jurisdiction,[5] which explains the name of the city. It is often called 'the one Mūnūr'.[6] The inhabitants of this city had fields and grazing grounds belonging to the community.[7] For some time there were great divisions and factions among the people of Mūnūr in connection with the harvest of the community lands. These factions were promoted by three Kalakilas,[8] members of another tribe that will be mentioned later. Some Bilavas were not living in cities, but in caves.[9] They worshipped the *liṅga* or phallus.[10]

Perhaps the Mīnas of Naṇḍūr, who despised the Bilavas,[11] seized the opportunity of these divisions in the city of Mūnūr to attack the city of Uḍayūr, which apparently was a very important one.[12] It was defended by twelve servants of the temple.[13] The city was conquered in the beginning of spring, to the great glory of the Fish of the Mīnas, rightly commemorated in the inscription.[14] Ūrilūr was also apparently taken.[15] Since that day Uḍayūr was a part of Mīnaḍ which thus was growing eastwards.

Shortly afterwards a friendly political union between the Mīnas and the Bilavas was brought about. Two Bilavas apparently were sent to the capital of the Mīnas to settle this union.[16] The symbol selected for the flag of this union was the two fishes of the Mīnas.[17] Since both the Mīnas and the Bilavas[18] had many canals in their lands, the union was styled Kalka akūr, i.e. 'the canalized united countries'.[19] This union was finally settled at the suggestion

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[1] Mazumdar, *Explorations in Sind*, Pl. XVIII, No. 38.
[2] Marshall, M.D., No. 302.
[3] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5791.
[4] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12486; Marshall, H., No. 3; Gadd, *Ur*, Pl. I, No. 2.
[5] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 10889; H., Neg. 4160, No. 5.
[6] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12763.* [7] Mazumdar, *op. et. loc. cit.*
[8] *Ibid.* [9] Marshall, M.D., No. 70.
[10] Marshall, H., No. 99; Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 4157.
[11] Marshall, M.D., No. 87; Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Nq 19863.
[12] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6127. [13] *Ibid.*, No. 6861.
[14] Hunter, H., No. 109.
[15] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5671; M.D., 1930-31, No. 5729.
[16] Marshall, H., No. 54.
[17] Photo, H., Neg. 3053, No. 12; M.D., 1928-29, No. 7039.
[18] Marshall, M.D., No. 65. [19] *Ibid.*, No. 362.

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of the *Eruvus*, another section of the Bilavas.[1] These seem to have been people who were busy in the gold mines of Northern India. Since they were digging underground burrows like the ants, they were called Eruvus (later Erumbus), 'ants'.[2] Two rivers watered their country.[3] While busy in the Northern mountains they perhaps heard of the rising of the people of the Rocky River (*Kalar*) who marched on the Bilava territory playing a number of war horns.[4] (Where this Rocky River was we cannot say. Perhaps it was the river of Kābul which in the neighbourhood of Jalālābād passes between fantastic rocky walls.) The Eruvus informed the Mīnas and the Bilavas of the approaching enemy and this common danger precipitated the Bilava-Mīna union.[5] Since that day we find the Eruvus living in Nandūr (they were called Nand Eruvus) and even in Vēlur (Vēl Eruvus)[6] about which city we shall speak later. In point of fact even some Mīnas applied themselves to the lucrative task of digging gold, for we find a section of the Mīnas called Eruvu Mīnas.[7] This approximation between the Mīnas and the Eruvus made the former very enthusiastic about the latter. They call them 'great Eruvus'.[8]

There was another tribe which for some time had not been in friendly relations with the Bilavas. They were the *Eṭkālis*, 'the spiders', who were undoubtedly weavers. They considered themselves superior to the Bilavas.[9] They probably were the people living in the rainy mountain pass, where there was at least one village[10]; they had captured a trident of the Bilavas which was venerated in a forest of the Mīna-Bilava union.[11] The Eṭkālis were good fighters. Their archers threw a stick or rod in a special way which seems to have been proverbial.[12] Yet at a later period Bilavas and Eṭkālis are found united,[13] and the flag of their union bore the figure of the moon.[14] This union between the Eṭkālis and the Bilavas, was later on made to include the Mīnas. Thus the Mīnas, the Bilavas and the Eṭkālis became united.[15] An inscription refers to the two flags of the two fishes, which was the symbol of the

[1] Photo, H., Neg. 3008, No. 1.
[2] They are mentioned by Herodot, *Hist.*, b. III, No. 102; Strabo, *Geogr.*, b. XV, No. 37; Plinii, *Hist. Nat.*, b. XI, Ch. 31.
[3] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Dk, No. 10269.
[4] Marshall, M.D., No. 474.
[5] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Dk, No. 10323.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Marshall, M.D., No. 544.
[8] *D.C.C.O.*, I, Pl. 25, No. 15; *Del. en Perse*, II, p. 129.
[9] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 11196.
[10] Marshall, M.D., Nos. 421 and 258.
[11] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 3285. The predatory instincts of this mountain pass people remind one of the same practices of the people of the Khyber pass. Is this the pass mentioned in the inscriptions?
[12] Photo, H., Neg. 4395, No. 3.
[13] Marshall, M.D., No. 60.
[14] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6599.
[15] Marshall, H., No. 240.

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Mīna king.[1] The seal which bears this inscription has likewise the figure of an animal with three heads : of a unicorn, of a bull and of an ibex, which were the original *totems* of these three tribes : the unicorn of the Mīnas, the bull of the Bilavas and the ibex on the Eṭkāḷis. Yet the symbol represented on the flag of this three-tribe union is mentioned in their proto-Dravidian language thus : *taṅkadirēḷalar*, i.e., *the flower of the sun of reduced ray of light*.[2] Now since the sun of the reduced ray of light is the moon, this flower was the moon flower, viz. the lotus flower which closes its petals to the moon rays.[3]

There was still another tribe deeply despised by the Mīnas, the tribe of the Kāvals.[4] They were robbers. Since the houses guarded by them were not robbed by the other members of the tribe, they were called *Kāval*, which means, 'guard'. And as their thefts were committed in the dark of night, their name became synonymous with 'dark'. Their descendants are still in the U.P. and in Gujarat. There was a section of the Kāvals styled Lakil Kāvals,[5] 'thieving Kāvals' (*lak*, to lift, to steal, etc.). The Kāvals lived partly in high mountains[6] and partly in the plains. The latter had developed a perfect system of irrigation through canals,[7] and carried on trade.[8] They had ponds. A dispute about one of them is indirectly referred to. The headman of the place had to pass judgement on it.[9]

The Kāvals were very early united with another tribe, the Kaḷakilas, 'united leaves',[10] who are often mentioned in Purāṇic literature as Kiḷakilas or Kiḷakaḷas.[11] Some of them were merchants.[12] Their *totem* was a fish,[13] but the flag of their union with the Kāvals had a *liṅga* as their symbol.[14] They became so intimately united that their two different names became synonymous for political purposes.[15] The *liṅga* or phallus was originally worshipped amongst these two tribes only.[16] They also worshipped three suns[17] (perhaps the rising sun, the setting sun and the sun in

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[1] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 10893 ; 1929-30, Dk, No. 8184.
[2] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 8121.
[3] Cf. *Tanipaḍattiraṭṭu*, *Opillamaṇi Puḷavar*, No. 17 (Madras, 1923).
[4] Marshall, M.D., No. 373 ; Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12963.
[5] Photo, H., Neg. 3010, No. 5. [6] Marshall, M.D., No. 163.
[7] *Ibid.*, No. 11. [8] *Ibid.*, H., No. 243.
[9] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5667.
[10] Marshall, M.D., Nos. 271 and 381 ; Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7321.
[11] Cf. Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 163.
[12] Marshall, M.D., No. 464 ; Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 3335.
[13] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 3696.
[14] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5707. [15] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 10923.
[16] Marshall, H., No. 118 ; Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 4364.
[17] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. Dk, 3383.

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the zenith). On account of this the Mīnas said of them that they had three Supreme Beings.[1] This difference in religious beliefs seems to point to a different racial origin. Perhaps these two tribes were Kolarian.

Of the two tribes the Kāvals seem to have been more advanced. Besides twelve villages,[2] a number of their cities are known, Maramūr,[3] Talnālūr,[4] Nalamūr,[5]—a rich agricultural city,[6] situated in the neighbourhood of some mountains,[7]—Tirpūr,[8] Danaṇūr,[9] Orūr[10] and Uḍaynālūr. The last two cities were very near each other.[11] Uḍaynālūr was once attacked by the enemies of the Kāvals,[12] the Mīnas, helped by their friends, the Bilavas. The city was destroyed and remained in ruins for six years.[13] The *liṅga* worshipped there apparently was captured by the conquerors.[14] This victory took place in the month of the Jar.[15] Thus it was afterwards repeated as a proverb ' that the night (death) of Uḍaynālūr was the eye (brightness, light) of the two united countries ' of the Mīnas and the Bilavas.[16] As an effect of this war, Orūr became a portion of Mināḍ, ' in the year of the hoisting of the flag of the horn-fish '.[17] The Kāvals were forced to acknowledge the Mīna superiority[18] and the Kāval-Kalakila union became tributaries to the Mīnas.[19] The arrival of this tribute at the Mīna capital was commemorated with festivals that lasted eight days.[20] One of the clauses of the treaty of peace was that the Mīna king would also be called ' the farmer of the Crab of the (Kāval-) Kalakila union '.[21] He was also called Mīna of the Kalakilas.[22] The symbol of this new union were the Fishes of the Mīnas.[23] Consequently the latter were styled ' the Kalakilas of the Mīnas '.[24] In point of fact, some Kalakilas were engaged by the Mīnas to look after their farms. On the other hand some Mīnas settled among the Kāvals,[25] from whom they learnt the *liṅga* worship. Perhaps on account of this they were styled

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[1] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12963.
[2] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 467.
[3] *Ibid.*, H., No. 161 (or 261) and 329 §.
[4] Photo, H., Neg. 3012, No. 15; Photo, H., Neg. 3877, No. 14.
[5] Marshall, M.D., No. 478.
[6] *Ibid.*, M.D., Nos. 151, 203 and 330.
[7] Marshall, M.D., No. 420.
[8] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7462.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*, No. 5641.
[11] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, No. Dk, 8350.
[12] Marshall, H., No. 144.
[13] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. Dk, 11359.
[14] Photo, H., Neg. 3068, No. 5; Photo, H., Neg. 4159, No. 4.
[15] Photo, H., Neg. 4159, No. 4.
[16] Marshall, M.D., No. 336.
[17] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 8984.
[18] Marshall, M.D., No. 191.
[19] *Ibid.*, No. 531.
[20] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 4181.
[21] *Ibid.*, Dk, No. 10359.
[22] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6886.
[23] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 3589.
[24] *Ibid.*, Dk, No. 10222.
[25] Marshall, M.D., 373.

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weak.[1] The Great Mīna, or Mīna king, constructed a splendid house with different apartments, in the city of Taḷnāḷūr of the Kāvals, where he apparently used to live at times.[2] The cult of the *liṅga* was subsequently introduced in Naṇḍūr by the Mīna king, but this religious innovation produced a revolution which resulted in the dethronment and imprisonment of the king.[3] On the contrary the Kāvals seem to have learned the celebration of the Nandal (now Poṅgal) festival from the Mīnas.[4]

But besides this kingdom of the Mīnas in North India, there was another kingdom of the Mīnas in the South. Its capital was Vēlūr, a city which is said to be 'outside the country', in the inscriptions of the North.[5] Other inscriptions clearly say that it is in the South.[6] Besides other possible means, information was carried from the south to the north and vice versa through cowherds who migrated from Vēlūr towards the North.[7] In a poem of the Sangam period the tradition is recorded that the city of Vēlūr (of the South) was founded at a place where a *vēl* (a trident) adorned with flowers appeared.[8] Now one of the inscriptions mentions 'the trident of Vēlūr adorned with Nandukal flowers'.[9] Both statements seem to refer to the same tradition. Vēlūr soon grew in an extraordinary way.[10] The houses in Vēlūr seem to have been numberless.[11] The city is always called a city of the Mīnas,[12] and the name of the Vēlūr king was also Mīna.[13] He is at times called the Mīna of the South.[14] This king was on friendly terms with the Eṭkāḷi Bilavas,[15] for which reason, presumably some Bilavas were able to acquire properties in Vēlūr.[16] The country round Vēlūr was fertile and the crops were abundant.[17] Two quarters of the harvest were supposed to be for the maintenance of the temple.[18] The country was ruled with extraordinary justice to the extent that it was a common saying

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] Cf. Heras, *The Religion of the Mohenjo Daro People according to the Inscriptions*, *Journal of the University of Bombay*, V, pp. 13–15.

[3] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6381.

[4] Marshall, M.D., Nos. 139 and 247; Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6422.

[5] Marshall, M.D., Nos. 60 and 400.

[6] Marshall, M.D., No. 400.

[7] *Paṭṭuppāṭṭu*, III, 172-173.

[8] Marshall, M.D., Nos. 52 and 395.

[9] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7145.

[10] Marshall, M.D., No. 286; Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 9127; Photo, H., Neg. 3893, No. 4.

[11] Marshall, M.D., No. 555.

[12] *Ibid.*, M.D., Nos. 367 and 951.

[13] *Ibid.*, M.D., Nos. 60.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 9127.

[16] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12293; Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 8254; Marshall, M.D., Nos. 175 and 397.

[17] Marshall, M.D., Pl. CXVI, No. 15.

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that 'there is no justice outside Vēlūr'.[1] In the neighbourhood of the city there were mountains—six mountains, says an inscription[2]—inhabited by the Iralars[3]—a tribe who live in the forests of Jinji even at the present day. These mountains were apparently fortified, for they are said to be the strength of the dynasty ruling in Vēlūr.[4] One of the main cities of the kingdom was Uḍayūr, which is said to belong to Mīnan.[5] This city may possibly be Uraiyūr, the small village near Trichinopoly, which was the first capital of the Cōḷa kings.

These fortifications must have been very helpful to the Vēlūr king on the occasion of a war waged against him by a tribe of the West of his kingdom: the Kananirs (probably the Kannaḍigas or Kanarese people) who were united with the Kuḍagas (later called the Vānaras in Saṁskṛta, the people of Kuḍagu or Coorg) who were very strong people. The latter were numerous for they formed two united countries of Kuḍagas.[6] When that invasion took place, a battle was fought at a coconut plantation near Vēlūr.[7] The result is not mentioned, but the fact that after this we find the king of Vēlūr fighting in the very country of the Kuḍagas shows that the war was not successful to the latter and their allies. Mīna, the king of Vēlūr, with his Kalars (another tribe still in Trichinopoly District and the neighbourhood) successfully stormed one of the strongholds of the Kuḍagas.[8] After this war, peace between the two parties was settled at a house of Vēlūr which was noted as having one window.[9] The Mīnas of Vēlūr with the Kananirs and the Kuḍagas of the West formed a union of countries,[10] the sovereignty of which would rest in the king of Vēlūr,[11] whose efforts obtained the constitution of this union.[12]

Paravanāḍ.

This country was the country of the Paravas (birds). They are still numerous on the Coromandel coast in South India and in Ceylon.[13] The Paravas were a section of the Mīnas. There were

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[1] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 121.
[2] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6422.
[3] Marshall, M.D., No. 139.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, M.D., 421; H., No. 11; Inscription 636 says that there were seven Uḍayūrs.
[6] Marshall, H., No. 340.
[7] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 8254.
[8] Marshall, M.D., No. 321.
[9] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 329.
[10] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 397.
[11] Photo, H., Neg. 3893, No. 4.
[12] Marshall, M.D., No. 336.
[13] During the time when it was a fashion to claim Āryan descent, the Paravas started to call themselves Bharatar, identifying themselves with the Bharatas of the Vedic period. The Mohenjo Daro inscriptions clearly show that their ancient and real name was Paravir.

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two subdivisions of the Paravas : Pagal Paravas and Nila Paravas, i.e. Sun Paravas [1] and Moon Paravas.[2] The Moon Paravas seem to have been the more important of the two. They constituted one fourth of the whole Mīna stock.[3] In the middle of their lands, the exact location of which cannot be now ascertained, the sign of the moon was hoisted.[4] The Mīnas proper and the Paravas remained always together.[5] They were also in friendly relations with the Eṭkāḷis [6] as the latter were the Mīna's friends. Yet the country where the Paravas lived was sometimes called Paravanāḍ—once only in the inscriptions[7]—on account of their political importance and their riches.[8] Properly speaking, it was only a portion of Mīnāḍ.

Their occupations were fishing, as the rest of the Mīnas, trade [9] and agriculture.[10] They had also coconut plantations.[11] Their country was irrigated by canals. One of them had to be of considerable length for they spent more than a year in constructing it. They commenced it in the month of the Fish—the last month of the year—and the work was not completed till the month of the Fish of the following year.[12]

Their main city was called Paravirpalli,[13] 'the city of the Paravas'. No other city is known up to now but an inscription mentions six hamlets which were united (for administrative purposes, evidently) thanks to the efforts of one of the Paravas.[14] One of the hamlets of their country—we do not know whether it was one of the six mentioned just now—was called Malakopa.[15] Its name show that it was situated in the neighbourhood of mountains. Yet it had some coconut plantations.[16] Barter was being practised in this hamlet.[17]

The king of the Paravas always received the title of Mīnavan, and his banner had two fishes painted on it.[18] The Paravas were the

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[1] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6266.
[2] Marshall, M.D., No. 36.
[3] *Ibid.* The Paravas of South India and Ceylon are Moon Paravas. Their tradition is that they come from the moon.
[4] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7790.
[5] Photo, H., Neg. 3012, No. 2.
[6] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12877.
[7] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Nos. 12877 and 12688.
[8] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5785.
[9] Marshall, M.D., No. 228.
[10] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12688.
[11] *Ibid.*, No. 4052.
[12] Marshall, M.D., No. 237.
[13] Marshall, M.D., Pl. CXI, No. 338.
[14] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5703.
[15] Marshall, M.D., No. 89.
[16] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7539 ; 1930-31, No. 12281.
[17] Marshall, M.D., No. 408.
[18] Marshall, M.D., No. 8 ; Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12688. The title of the Pāṇḍya kings of Madura, the sovereigns of the Paravas of South India in the historical period also was Mīnavan and he had two fishes as his *lāñcana*. Was he a descendant of the ancient king of Paravanāḍ ?

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cause of the union of the whole of Mīnāḍ about which we shall speak presently.

Marankotipāḍ.

This country is called the Middle Country.[1] This denomination seems to place it near the mountains which are called 'middle',[2] which perhaps are meant to be the range of the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush. This would place the country of the Woodpecker in the northernmost regions of India, which seems to be confirmed by the denomination of white given to this country.[3] Being so far north it would be easily covered with snow. Though the country was mountainous, yet there were also coconuts growing in the plains.[4] Portions of the country were cultivated [5] and there was a canal called the 'canal of the Ram',[6] but in general the country seems to have been somewhat backward, for no feast of Nandal [7] was celebrated at the end of the harvest season[8] and the people were despised.[9] Yet the people lived in houses.[10]

The people of the country were *Vēlālir* or Velālas, who are still so numerous in South India. They are called Vēlālir of the Middle Mountains'[11] while another inscription mentions 'the white mountains of him of the Vēlālirs',[12] a phrase which seems to imply that the 'white mountains' were within the dominions of the king of the Velālas. What were these white mountains? There is still in western Afghānistān a range of high mountains covered with snow during great part of the year, which are called *Safed-koh*, i.e. white mountains.[13] Probably these are the mountains referred to in the inscriptions. These middle mountains were near the frontier.[14]

Evidently the Velālas worshipped the trident, *vēl*, of the Supreme Being, for they take their name from it. They also worshipped the *linga*.[15] They exercised trade [16] and successfully tilled the land.[17] They had three canals [18] about which an investigation was carried

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[1] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, No. Dk, 9069.
[2] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 219.
[3] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1930-31, No. 12182.
[4] Now called Poñgal.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] Marshall, M.D., No. 130.
[7] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Dk, No. 10551.
[8] Marshall, H., Nos. 76 and 346.
[9] Photo, H., Neg. 4876, No. 12a.
[10] *Ibid.*, No. 3500.
[11] Marshall, M.D., No. 306.
[12] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 3631.
[13] The word *koh* is not of Arabic origin. Its Āryan origin is not very clear either. May it perhaps be traced to the Dravidian word *kō*, 'mountain'?
[14] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6689 (duplicate).
[15] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1930-31, No. Dk, 10551.
[16] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1928-29, No. 4883.
[17] Marshall, M.D., No. 397.
[18] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6127.

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out.[1] One of the inscriptions speaks of the 'illustrious rulers of the victorious Velālas'.[2] This shows that in a war the Velālas had obtained a victory, on account of which they were exultant for a time.[3] Against whom was this war waged? The facts that we find the Velālas forming a union with the country of the Minas, and that these unions have on many occasions followed wars and victories seem to suggest a victory over the Minas. There is, indeed, among the inscriptions a clear reference to a victory over the Minas which apparently refers to this occasion. One of the seals instead of bearing the figure of an animal has the representation of something that looks like an octopus. Yet, it is the skin of the unicorn, the head and horn of which are clearly seen to the right. The skin is spread showing the skin of the four legs and of the tail in the shape of five appendices. The representation of the skin in this guise evidently reminds one of a trophy of war. The unicorn, the symbol of the Minas, was *morally killed*, and its skin is taken as a trophy of victory by the killers. The destruction of the unicorn supposed a victory of the enemies of the Minas over the whole tribe. The inscription on this seal reads as follows: 'The Supreme Being of Mina is help'.[4] Mina seems to be the name of the ruler of the Velālas. He, after showing the trophy of victory, attributes it to the help received from the Supreme Being.[5]

The union between the Velālas of Maraṅkotināḍ and the country of the Minas was beyond doubt carried out as an effect of this victory, for the benefit of both the tribes.[6] This union was finally settled in the house of some Sun Paravas who were the friends of the villagers of the Woodpecker country.[7] According to his settlement the Mina king was in future the king of Mināḍ and Maraṅkotināḍ.[8] The symbol of their common flag was the sign of the moon,[9] which was the original symbol of the Velālas.[10]

Under the Mina régime soon the Woodpecker country made rapid progress. In one year many houses were built [11] where perhaps there were miserable huts before. Some Minas settled in Maraṅkotināḍ and cultivated their lands as in their own country,[12] at the end of the harvest season celebrating the Nandal festival.[13] Thus

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[1] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1930-31, Dk, No. 11794.
[2] Marshall, H., No. 25.
[3] Marshall, *op. cit.*, I, Pl. XII, No. 25.
[4] Cf. Heras, *The Religion of the Mohenjo Daro People*; *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[5] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7415.
[6] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7790.
[7] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 8252.
[8] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1930-31, Dk, No. 10551.
[9] *Ibid.*, H., Neg. 3050, No. 15.
[10] Marshall, M.D., No. 397.
[11] *Ibid.*, H., Neg. 3877, No. 7.
[12] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 306.

this feast was introduced into the land, and was celebrated afterwards in the same way as in Mīnāḍ.[1]

Ēḷnāḍ.

This country, which means the seven countries, is not very often referred to in the inscriptions.[2] Coconut plantations existed in it.[3]

Besides the above information about persons and places, several tribes, cities and villages are spoken of in the inscriptions which cannot at this stage be located in any of the four mentioned *nāḍs*. We shall enumerate them below in alphabetical order with the scanty information obtained about each.

Tribes.

1. *Aḷinas* (Squirrels).[4] A tribe mentioned in the *Rgveda* as having fought against Sudas in the battle of the ten kings.

2. *Kōḷis* (Fowls).[5] They are still in the neighbourhood of Bombay and other places in Western India. In their country there were three rivers.[6] The favours of their king are mentioned.[7] Apparently there was another dynasty claiming the throne; it was called the 'back dynasty'.[8]

3. *Mūṉkālir* (three-legged people).[9]

4. *Nāgas* (Serpents). Very frequently mentioned in Purāṇic literature. Found only once in the inscriptions up to now. Probably they were Kolarians. They believed in spirits or demons.[10]

5. *Nalakir* (People that rise high). They are said to lead a 'happy' life.[11] Perhaps the house of merriment mentioned in another inscription[12] belonged to them.

6. *Nālkālir* (Four-legged people).[13] They were agriculturists. The good thrashing of their harvest is referred to.[14]

7. *Pareanir* (Drum-players). It is the word corresponding to the name of the present Pariahs, though there is no foundation for identifying the social status of both these groups of people. The present pariahs are also drum-players. The two united countries of the Pareanir are mentioned once.[15]

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[1] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7415.
[2] Marshall, M.D., No. 231.
[3] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, Nos. 4663 and 5227; M.D., 1930-31, No. 4663.
[4] Marshall, M.D., No. 172.
[5] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 207.
[6] Photo, H., Neg. 4876, No. 2.
[7] Marshall, M.D., Pl. CXVI, No. 22.
[8] Photo, H., Neg. 4876, No. 2.
[9] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7115.
[10] *Ibid.*, No. 5717.
[11] Marshall, M.D., No. 122.
[12] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, No. 4562.
[13] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5128.
[14] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 8106.
[15] Marshall, H., No. 317. Cf. Nelson, *The Madura Country*, p. 75 (Madras, 1868).

Cities and Villages.

1. *Arirūr* (City of Rivers).[1]

2. *Irūr* (Double City). That is the reason why the inscription speaks of 'one Irūr'.[2] Its inhabitants enjoyed great material prosperity.[3]

3. *Irupaṭi* (Living Village).[4] The goddess *Mīnkaṇi* was worshipped in this village.[5] She seems to have been the forerunner of Mīnākṣi of Madura.

4. *Kūḍumale* (United Mountains).[6]

5. *Kuḍavūr* (City of the Water Jar). The lands which were just outside this city belonged to Nālūrmale.[6] Two Mīnas were living there.[7]

6. *Kūḍukopa* (united hamlets).[8]

7. *Mūnmale* (three mountains).[9] Apparently it was a weak place at first.[10] Afterwards it was fortified.[11] The city appears to have had many houses.[12] It belonged to one landlord.[13] A Bilava army attacked this city once.[14]

8. *Nālmale* (four mountains).[15] It is called the 'silver Nālmale',[16] perhaps because it was often covered with snow.

9. *Nankopa* (friendly hamlet). It had cultivated lands.[17]

10. *Nanpaṭi* (friendly village).[18]

11. *Taḻirpaṭi* (prosperous village).[19]

12. *Uyarēlpaḷi* (the city of the high sun). This city was for a time in a flourishing state, but the end of its prosperity is once referred to.[20] Perhaps this calamity is connected with the end of the rulers of the city or of the whole dynasty, of 'the carriers of domination' as the epigraph puts it.[21]

When new inscriptions will be unearthed, the above scanty information will be complemented and the knowledge of the people and the land of those days will eventually become complete.

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[1] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 6429.
[2] Marshall, M.D., No. 162.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*, M.D., No. 388.
[5] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5969.
[6] Marshall, M.D., No. 420.
[7] Photo, M.D., 1930-31, Dk, No. 10231.
[8] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7061.
[9] Marshall, M.D., No. 113.
[10] Photo, H., Neg. 4156, No. 5.
[11] Marshall, M.D., No. 140; Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5567; 1929-30, No. Dk, 7947; 1930-31, No. 7947.
[12] Photo, H., Neg. 3863, No. 5; M.D., 1928-29, No. 5567.
[13] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5567.
[14] Photo, M.D., 1929-30, Dk, No. 7947; 1930-31, No. 7947.
[15] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 5341.
[16] Marshall, M.D., No. 438.
[17] Photo, M.D., 1928-29, No. 7679.
[18] *Ibid.*, M.D., 1930-31, No. 8224.
[19] Marshall, M.D., No. 300.
[20] Photo, M.D., 1928-30, No. 5473.
[21] *Ibid.*, No. 7734.

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